



Center for Slavic and East European Studies

University of California
Berkeley, California
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Newsletter

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In This Issue:

- Mel Gordon on Russian Drama: Stanislavsky and Meyerhold
- Kazakh-American Archaeological Expedition
- A Tribute to James Hart
- Student News: Fellowships, Honors and New Students

Editor: Anne Hawkins
415/642-9107

Russian/Soviet Drama: A Talk With Professor Mel Gordon

Prior to joining the UC Berkeley faculty in January 1990 as professor in the Department of Dramatic Art, Mel Gordon was affiliated with New York University for nine years. A specialist in Russian theater, Professor Gordon has directed many productions in New York and Europe, including re-creations of Russian/Soviet productions. He is the author of several books on the theater, among them The Stanislavsky Technique: Russia (NY: Applause Books, 1987); Meyerhold's Biomechanics, with Alma Law (forthcoming); and Stella Adler, The Technique of Acting, Mel Gordon, ed. (NY: Bantam Books, 1988).

He was associate editor of The Drama Review from 1975 to 1986 and is a frequent contributor to magazines and journals. Two University Theater productions directed by Professor Gordon are scheduled for this fall: Night In the Old Market [October dates], and Camillo's Kabbalistic Theatre [see Calendar for performance information].

AH: You describe yourself as the first neutral scholar you know of on the subject of Stanislavsky. Why do you say that?

MG: Most people who write about Stanislavsky have some hidden agenda. Basically they're anti-method, anti-Strasberg [Lee Strasberg, a founder of the Group Theater; founder of Actor's Studio and the Lee Strasberg Institute; and the creator of method acting, based on Stanislavsky's system]. I'm both a practitioner and scholar, have worked with many, many people in the field, and am interested in all kinds of theater, all kinds of systems. Also, the fact that I'm not an actor may explain why I don't have an axe to grind!

AH: What about Meyerhold. Is he as controversial a figure?

MG: No. He was equally innovative, but Meyerhold's work doesn't have much direct application for actors, so the stakes are aesthetic and historical, not practical. There are scholars who don't know as much about him as they should; there are political agendas; but the problem isn't the same.

AH: You teach, write, direct—in fact you have two plays in production now, *Night in the Old Market* and *Camillo's Kabbalistic Theatre*, both of which are reconstructions of lost works. How do you approach a re-creation? Do you attempt to construct an exact duplication?

MG: Every production is different. I try to be as true to the material as possible, but reconstructions present many problems. For instance, with a re-creation you have a different audience with different cultural references. I often use the example of the film *Citizen Kane* to talk about this. Viewers try to approach it with 1940s eyes, because they know that's when the film was made. They accept it as it is and don't try to change it. But, unlike film audiences, theater audiences are not used to viewing artifacts, nor, for the most part, should they be. Nearly all my re-creations have been done in museums, and I find the association between museum and artifact helpful.

Another problem arises with actors. Most of them think it isn't creative to reconstruct someone else's role; they want to develop their own interpretation. It requires a certain kind of actor.

AH: How do you go about reconstructing a play?

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See Gordon/page 4

News From the Berkeley-Stanford Program

Fall is upon us, and that means the beginning of a new academic year for the Berkeley-Stanford Program. Welcome back to our continuing students, and warm greetings to our newcomers. While the previous year was one of unprecedented changes in the subject area of our study, this year promises to be even more tumultuous in the Soviet Union. After a hot summer of cigarette demonstrations, bread riots, and the failure to reap the largest harvest in Soviet history, the USSR is heading into uncharted and stormy waters.

Several of our students have recently returned from summers of language study and research in the Soviet Union. Third-year political science students Rudy Sil, Shari Cohen and Matt Siena studied Russian in Moscow; while third-year sociology student Howard Allen did his Russian language study in Leningrad. Geology student Marcia Levenson studied Icelandic in Reykjavik. Both Philip Goldman and James Chavin, second-year political science students, spent the summer in Moscow conducting research. David Woodruff, incoming student in the Department of Political Science, was in Moscow last year; during the summer he attended the Twenty-Eighth party Congress of the CPSU as a reporter for UPI. There he met James Chavin, who spent a day at the Congress as a reporter for the Pacifica News Agency! We look forward to an exciting series of Graduate Student Colloquia this fall with their reports on the status of the disintegration of Soviet power.

The Program also welcomes visiting faculty member Jeffrey Hahn from Villanova University, who specializes in political participation and local politics in the Soviet Union. Professor Hahn is conducting an informal graduate seminar entitled "Doing Research in the Soviet Union." As Professor Hahn is leading

a major research project on political participation in the USSR and has access to extensive and unique data, this promises to be a very useful seminar. The Program will sponsor two other visitors: Vladislav Zubok, from the USA and Canada Institute in Moscow, in residence at Stanford during the winter quarter; and Victor Zaslavsky, from Memorial University in Newfoundland, who will lead a seminar on Soviet ethnic politics at Berkeley and Stanford during the spring semester and winter quarter, respectively.

Our year has already begun with a bang as George Breslauer hosted Program students and faculty for an opening barbecue at his home on August 28. The Program also co-sponsored with the Center for Slavic and East European Studies a very successful and well attended series of panel discussions with Soviet and East European scholars on September 4. We anticipate the continuation of a busy fall with Soviet visitors including Andranik Migranian, Alexander Tsypko, and others; coming from Washington D.C. in December, we expect Bruce Parrott. Stay tuned for further developments!!

—Andrew C. Kuchins
Executive Director

Newsletter

of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, University of California at Berkeley.
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An Invitation to Join ASC

The Associates of the Slavic Center (ASC), is a group of individuals who actively support the programs and goals of the Center for Slavic and East European Studies at Berkeley. ASC involvement is vital to the growth and enrichment of Center activities.



Associates of the Slavic Center (ASC)
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Members (to \$100) Members receive invitations to special wine and cheese lecture events, informal evening talks on campus featuring guest speakers.

Sponsors (\$100-up) Sponsors, in addition, are our guests at dinner and evening programs associated with our annual conferences. Sponsors also receive a uniquely-designed T-shirt, promoting Slavic and East European studies at Berkeley. All donors of \$100 or more are listed in Berkeley's Annual Report of Private Giving.

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Center Circle (\$1,000-up) In addition to the above-mentioned activities, donors within the Center Circle also become Robert Gordon Sproul Associates of the University. As such, they are invited to the Chancellor's annual black tie banquet and to luncheons before the major football games. They also receive membership in the Faculty Club and twenty other worldwide faculty clubs, have free parking whenever visiting the campus, and enjoy special parking privileges on football game days.

Please use the form on page 11 to join us for an exciting and eventful year!

Notes From the Chair

The years 1989 and 1990 will be remembered for resonating changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. These changes have thrust the Center and our program into the forefront of world events, a fact that becomes evident when you consider the quantity and variety of scholars coming to Berkeley to present their views and perspectives on developments in their countries. We welcome these visitors and thank them for the increased opportunities they provide for the exchange of information and discussion of pertinent issues.

I would like to use the occasion of this, our first full issue of the academic year, to extend a welcome to a special group of visitors now on campus, our current research associates and visiting faculty: Marek Gurgul, Ph.D., Public International Law, Jagellonean University; Calin Anastasiu, Ph.D., sociologist, senior researcher, University of Bucharest; Benina Berger-Gould, clinical psychologist, Jeffrey Hahn, Professor of Political Science, Villanova University; Gail Kligman, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas, Austin; Mihaly Pop, Professor, Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest; Richard Remnek, Ph.D., Soviet specialist, and Young-sang Yim, Associate Professor of History, Hankuk University, Seoul.

I would also like to welcome the new Berkeley students who have decided to focus their future careers

on the USSR or Eastern Europe.

You will see in our section, Student News, that our student body in this area is exceptionally diverse. We are proud of them all. New students, please be sure to come to the Center and avail yourselves of the listings of events, support and employment opportunities, etc., which are posted on the Center bulletin boards.

The logo which appears below the Center's familiar Firebird on page one represents a reorganization of international studies at Berkeley begun last year. This move reflects increased awareness of the importance of internationally-based education within the University. The Center is an important part of International and Area Studies, which now has its own Dean, Albert Fishlow, Professor of Economics. You will undoubtedly be seeing other evidence of this reinforcement of international studies at Berkeley as new programs and cooperative ventures among area centers take effect.

I would like to also thank our donors and welcome all new members of ASC. Your support is of immense assistance as we strive to stay on top of developments in our area. To all readers, welcome to another year of excitement—we look forward to seeing you at some of our events!

—George W. Breslauer
Chair of the Center

We Sincerely Thank

the following individuals who contributed to the Center from April 1990 to October 1990:

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Gordon/from page 1

MG: I have a large collection of materials. In fact, collecting lost materials interests me almost more than anything else. I work from film clips, audio and videotapes, notes, diaries and memoirs, lectures, still photographs: whatever is available. I interview anyone connected with the original production who's still alive and will talk to me. And, of course, I use scripts when I can. Here's a story about the way I work. Meyerhold's most wildly successful production was *Trest D.E.* Produced in 1924, it played for five years. *D.E.* was a political sci-fi comedy in which American millionaires decide to destroy Europe and the Soviet Union, so the Soviet army digs a tunnel from Leningrad to Union Square in New York City, rushes in troops, and rescues the American worker. There were fifteen episodes, each one in a different acting style. It included screen projections and Apache dancing as well. The script, written by a civil engineer and his students from a novel by Ehrenburg, was lost, and supposedly no scripts had survived.

I had already rewritten the script for a production. When I went to the Soviet Union and asked at the archives for an original copy, I was told there were none. I said to the curator, "It isn't possible that nothing has survived in a play with forty actors, all of whom had parts." But the curator was adamant. As we talked, someone told me he had just read the manuscript of *D.E.* in that room! When I pointed this out to the curator, she was so embarrassed she had copies made of all the versions for me.

So now I have the original script, but I also have a dilemma. Hal Prince is interested in *D.E.* Do I use the Meyerhold version, which will be about six hours long and which no one will understand, or do I work with mine, which is about 100 minutes long and has some additions which I put in for the sake of intelligibility? My solution is that I'll do the best I can, using both sources and explaining in the program notes that I've adapted the play using as much of the original as possible.

AH: *I hope you can bring the show to the Bay Area; it sounds wild, like a political Oz book!*

Let's move on and talk about Stanislavsky, maybe picking up his life at the time he founded the Moscow Art Theater with Nemirovich-Danchenko. Why were they interested in teaming up?

MG: Nemirovich-Danchenko thought they could have a glorious theater, far beyond the financial capabilities of similar contemporary theaters in Europe. Danchenko was essentially interested in Stanislavsky's money, though other factors entered into his decision. Stanislavsky was, after all, greatly talented though an amateur, and was

Konstantin Stanislavsky

- 1863 Born Konstantin Sergeevich Alexeyev into a wealthy merchant-class Moscow family
- 1877 The Alexeyev family organizes an amateur company, the Alexeyev Circle; Konstantin begins acting in productions
- 1884 Konstantin takes the name Stanislavsky, that of a Polish actor retiring from the stage
- 1888 With three others, forms the Society of Art and Literature
- 1889 Marries Marie "Lilina" Perevoschikova
- 1898 Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko (Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, 1858-1943), nobleman, critic, and teacher at the Philharmonic Dramatic School, plan the formation of a new theater; the Moscow Art Theater opens in fall 1898; Chekhov's *The Sea Gull* premieres in December
- 1901 Moscow Art Theater organizes a dramatic school
- 1902 The Theater is completely refurbished and a new stage design implemented
- 1905 The Theater tours Europe
- 1906 While on retreat in Finland, Stanislavsky originates his system of actor training
- 1910? Meets Sulerzhitsky (Leopold Sulerzhitsky, 1872-1916)
- 1911 The Theater formally adopts Stanislavsky's system.
- 1912 Stanislavsky organizes the First Studio, an actor's lab
- 1922-
- 1924 The Theater tours Europe and the US; publication of *My Life in Art*, Stanislavsky's autobiography
- 1928 Stanislavsky has heart attack on the occasion of the 30th anniversary celebration of the Theater
- 1936 Publication in U.S. of Stanislavsky's *An Actor Prepares*; Publication of Nemirovich-Danchenko's autobiography, *My Life in the Russian Theater*
- 1938 Stanislavsky dies
- 1949 Publication of Stanislavsky's *Building a Character*

20

becoming well-known in Moscow as an actor and director. Ironically, Stanislavsky was very careful with his money and gave very little to the Moscow Art Theater. He did give a great deal to the First Studio [the actor's lab formed as an adjunct to the Theater in 1905].

Stanislavsky, for his part, was ready to move from semi-pro to professional status, and Danchenko could certainly provide that. He had had his own theater and school, the Philharmonic, for years. But dissension between the two began very soon, within a few months after Moscow Art Theater was organized. There was the money situation; another bone of contention was that Danchenko wanted to do Chekhov and Stanislavsky didn't, until he discovered a way to manifest the unspoken subtextual actions and feelings that abound in Chekhov's work. Now this wasn't what Danchenko wanted at all, nor did Chekhov. But Stanislavsky was able to subvert them both artistically, and his productions of Chekhov's plays were mostly successes.

In all my times of seeing Chekhov—and I've seen some

theater—I've never, ever once seen a production of Chekhov in the English- or French-speaking world that was interesting. Absolutely the most boring theatrical experience ever! But in Russia, even among the non-Moscow Art-influenced studios, Chekhov is fascinating. Stanislavsky really unravelled the key to Chekhov, who is not about the loneliness of life, nor about a particular moment in Russian culture, so much as he is about the internal monologue—to me the most important element in Russian culture—which exists because Russians are taught not to say what they're thinking. Russian actors understand this, and are able to convey this

From this trauma Stanislavsky finally emerged with the nucleus of his system, the concept that the secret of good acting, the secret to the creative state of mind in general, is to be always in love.

monologue to their audience. Internal monologues exist in other cultures, of course, but Chekhov really caught the essence of the Russian's. But, back to Danchenko and Stanislavsky, recent scholarship emphasizes the fact that the conflict between the two was much worse than anyone had thought. They literally didn't talk to one another for, maybe, ten years.

AH: *How on earth did they run the Theater?*

MG: Each man had a separate area of responsibility, and when they absolutely had to communicate, they sent notes back and forth. It was not a very satisfactory arrangement. One other factor that may have increased their enmity: Stanislavsky was not a well-educated man, whereas Danchenko was very well-educated. Stanislavsky knew very little about politics or the world outside the theater. He interpreted everything technically, and he used things and people to his own theatrical ends.

AH: *What was he like as a person?*

MG: Stanislavsky probably had manic-depressive characteristics. His personal makeup was childish, or perhaps adolescent would be a better description. He was like a typical 12-year-old, analysing his own behavior to bits, always unhappy, always on the lookout for something new. I think this character trait worked in his favor in one respect: he was more interested in the search itself than in finding solutions to problems concerning his motivation techniques, so the system stayed fluid.

There are many delicious contradictions in looking at Stanislavsky, but they don't prevent me from viewing him as a whole. Everyone is filled with contradictions. The question is, how deep are they? What do they mean? In Stanislavsky's case, one effect of his character and of his feud with Danchenko is that he was drawn to young people. This was one form his anger and depression took. One of the central issues in my book on Stanislavsky is the importance of the young Sulerzhitsky in Stanislavsky's life.

AH: *Never heard of him. Who was he?*

MG: It's such a great story. I'll try to put it into a few words. In 1906 Stanislavsky was 43 years old. The Moscow Art theater had just completed a successful tour in Germany and Austro-Hungary. Stanislavsky was secure in his reputation—at that time the Theater was the most famous in the world. He was praised for his acting; he had a family; he was making money. And what did he do? He went into a deep depression. Among the reasons for this was his dissatisfaction with his own acting, which he felt was wooden and clumsy. He went to Finland, ostensibly on vacation, and had a nervous breakdown there which lasted for months. From this trauma Stanislavsky finally emerged with the nucleus of his system, the concept that the secret of good acting, the secret to the creative state of mind in general, is to be always in love. When you're in love your body is relaxed, you can concentrate, everything feels light and airy.

AH: *Stanislavsky suffered from his height and awkwardness, didn't he?*



MG: Yes. Stanislavsky had many problems with his body and was agonizingly self-conscious onstage. But when he was courting his wife, he felt he had done the best acting of his career. But here's the difficulty. No one can be in love all the time, and you can't will the condition. So he began to try to create simulations of the state of being in love. Danchenko thought he was going crazy; so did the theater board. Only the janitor at the Moscow Art Theater understood him—and this was Sulerzhitsky, or Suler, as every-

one called him [Leopold Sulerzhitsky, 1872-1916].

Suler was one of those magical leprechaun-like people whom everyone loved. Children loved him. Tolstoy thought so much of Suler that he had entrusted him with the business side of a spiritual collective, the Spirit Wrestlers, in Canada. Suler learned yoga there. He'd been a friend of Gorky; Isadora Duncan thought he was a great dancer; he'd been a soldier but was now a pacifist and a vegetarian. On his return from Canada, he became the janitor at the Theater. So Stanislavsky told him his theory concerning the connection between effective acting and being in love and mentioned that he was sure there must be a way to control the body. Suler then taught him yoga. At this point in his life, Stanislavsky needed a muse, someone to bring him knowledge from outside the theater world, and Suler fit the bill.

Stanislavsky was so impulsive. There's a moment I choose in my book to illuminate the Suler story. I'll try to summarize it. When Stanislavsky was 7 or 8 years old, he was taken to the circus and fell in love with the equestrienne. He ran out into the ring and kissed her. His family couldn't believe that this shy, introverted child had done such a bold thing. Well, he did almost the same thing with Suler. After their first talk, Suler got into a troika to go home. He lived on the outskirts of Moscow and wasn't allowed to spend the night in the town proper. So Stanislavsky jumped into the troika with Suler and went home with him. It was a magic moment in his life. They spent every minute of the next month together. Stanislavsky never forgot Suler, who died in 1916. On his deathbed, some 25 years later, he said, "Not a day goes by that I don't think of Suler."

No one has talked about Suler's pivotal position in Stanislavsky's work. To me he's crucial; he supplies the hidden motivation. What Suler did for Stanislavsky, I think, was to give him new life, and I mean that quite literally. The real impulse of Stanislavsky's later acting style came, not from within, but from without the theater, from this Tolstoyan, mystical element. For Stanislavsky, the purpose of acting as he saw it was not to deliver dialogue in some fine-sounding way, but to manifest the world.

AH: *How did Meyerhold's approach to theater differ from Stanislavsky's?*

MG: Their basic difference hinges on their divergent views of the audience's role in a performance. Stanislavsky stressed the concept of 'public solitude,' that is, his belief that the actor's attention must remain onstage at all times, not straying into the auditorium and *never* playing to the audience. Meyerhold disagreed. For him, the audience was the fourth and vital component of a theatrical whole, along with the actor, the director and the play-

wright. Meyerhold revelled in the give and take between spectator and performer, what the Formalists called "the baring of the device." Meyerhold believed that theater should be consciously theatrical; he had developed an aversion to Stanislavsky's inner work during the period he was connected with the Moscow Art Theater.

AH: *Meyerhold had had several successful theatrical ventures and for years had actually been a producer for the Imperial Theater in St. Petersburg. How did his work develop after the War?*

MG: He flourished in the post-war theatrical climate. Most Soviet theater in the 1920s was comic theater. As such, it required of its actors a different approach to performance. Stanislavsky's system, with its focus on inwardness and deep understanding of the role, not only took a long time to learn, it didn't meet the needs of the new theater. Actors were asked to do circus clowning, slapstick—external theater. Theater was very physical, and directors simply wanted their actors to get from here to there and slip on a banana peel.

But they also wanted a codified movement system, something which could be taught. It was in this atmosphere that Meyerhold developed Biomechanics. Meyerhold's

Vsevolod Meyerhold

- 1874 Born Karl Meyergold into the German Jewish community at Penza
- 1895 Changes name to Vsevolod Meyerhold and takes Russian citizenship
- 1896 Marries Olga Munt; founds Penza People's Theater; enrolls in acting course at the Philharmonic
- 1898 Founding member of Moscow Art Theater
- 1902 Quarrels with Stanislavsky, leaves Moscow Art Theater; founds his own company
- 1905 Returns to head Moscow Art Studio Theater at Stanislavsky's invitation
- 1906-
- 1907 Works with other companies
- 1908 Appointed to staff of Imperial Theatres, where he remains through World War I
- 1917 With other artists, meets representative of Bolshevik Party
- 1918 Appointed head of Petrograd Theater Section of Narkompros; joins the Party
- 1921 Marriage ends; NEP inaugurated
- 1922 Marries Zinaida Raikh; founds Meyerhold Theatre; coins term "Biomechanics"
- 1923 Receives title "People's Artist of the RSFSR"
- 1926 Meyerhold Theater gains state subsidy; renamed State Theater in the Name of Vs. Meyerhold
- 1938 Meyerhold Theatre closed; he is invited by Stanislavsky to work at his Opera Theatre
- 1939 Arrested and imprisoned; wife murdered
- 1940 Executed in prison

Biomechanics was the best-known of many movement systems created during this time. He combined elements from diverse sources: Japanese jugglers, *commedia dell'arte*, the circus. His movements were usually done with partners, to music. I've been teaching them to my actors in *Night in the Old Market*, because the original creators and performers of the piece studied with Meyerhold's teachers, Michael Chekhov's teachers, Nikolai Foregger's teachers. They just put all the movements together.

AH: *You mentioned Foregger; I don't know him.*

MG: Nikolai Foregger was the most radical director in Soviet history. He worked for a very short period, 1922-24, but during that brief time he did a lot of Futurist work. He used machine-like dances—he even had machines to teach the audience to act during intermission! Virtually all his pupils went on to become famous, Eisenstein being an example.

I have a story connected with Foregger. My wife and I were in the Soviet Union a year and a half ago, participating in two symposia: one on Meyerhold and one on Stanislavsky. We were the first Americans to visit Penza, Meyerhold's birthplace, where we lectured at the Meyerhold museum there. Back in Moscow, I was to lecture on my last day there. During my whole visit, I had been trying to gain access to Foregger's widow, Luda Semonova, who was 90 years old and living in a rest home in Moscow. She had invented Foregger's 300 movements, which, to my mind, are the most interesting of all the movement systems developed during that period.

Although I had asked several times, she had consistently refused to see me. Then, just as I arrived at the lecture hall

to talk, I got word that she would give an hour to me and my wife. I had a plane to catch and was in a tight spot.

So I did a crazy thing and left the auditorium, caught a cab and went to see her, leaving a hall full of people and cameras behind. You just don't do that, and particularly not in the Soviet Union. But it was worth it. I had recently produced and directed a Foregger Constructivist cabaret, MASTFOR Cabaret, which was as accurate as I could make it without having enough data on Foregger's movement system. It was the only production I'd done without the advice and assistance of a living survivor. And here was Luda Semonova, who remembered all the movements. My wife, who had performed them in my re-creation, did them for her. It turned out that we had been very accurate in our reconstruction. We were thrilled, and so was she, since she believed that no one cared about them any more. We spent four hours with her.

On our return to the auditorium I knew there would be hell to pay. The cameras were still waiting. I said, "When I tell you where I've been, you will forgive my rudeness," and I explained where I had been. "Why film me when you have the opportunity to film this historic person?" So they took the cameras to the rest home and filmed the 300 movements.

AH: *She must have felt such satisfaction to have finally gotten some recognition.*

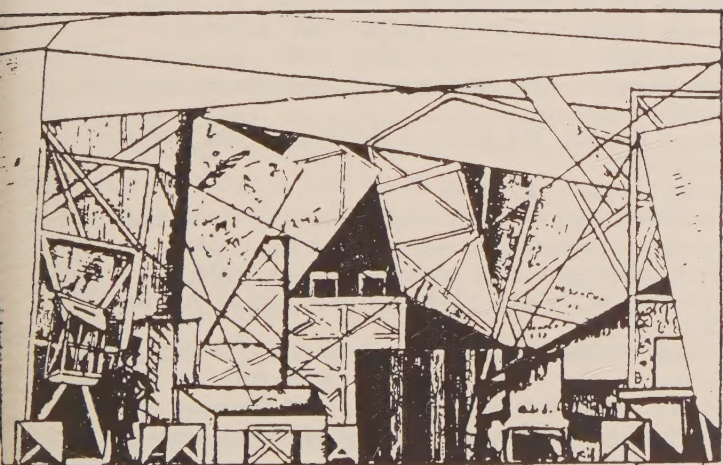
So times were good for Meyerhold during the 1920s. What was happening with Stanislavsky and the Moscow Art Theater during this time?

MG: Moscow Art Theater was highly experimental between, say, 1907 and World War I. They were doing Symbolist plays, grotesque plays, and so on. But after the Revolution, they had to make money.

AH: *Did Stanislavsky lose everything in the Revolution?*

MG: Actually the Bolsheviks left him his house and the theater, but they took his money. So the Theater went back to doing Chekhov and other sure things—what for them were nostalgia plays. In the period after the War and Revolution, going to the theater was as close as the Soviet people could get to exile. Life was hard and people hated the Soviet reality: the loss of status, the deprivations. So watching a play like *The Cherry Orchard*, something you'd seen in 1904, was a highly stimulating emotional experience.

AH: *I'm curious about his continuing favor. Here's this classic bourgeois character, almost a parody of privilege. Why was he allowed to carry on?*



p. 100 Stanislavsky

Student News

The Center takes great pleasure in announcing the results of national and University fellowship competitions in which UC Berkeley graduate students took part. As is always the case, our students made a great showing. Congratulations, everyone!

IREX grants:

The following UC Berkeley graduate students have been awarded IREX Soviet or East European research grants for the current year. **Arista Cirtautas**, political science (Poland); **Eric Hirsch**, geography (Hungary); **Jason McDonald**, political science (Hungary); **Susan Morrissey**, history (Soviet Union); **Gregory Salmon**, music (Soviet Union); **John Torpey**, sociology (East Germany); **Theodore Weeks**, history (Soviet Union). In addition, **Robert Geraci**, history, was awarded a developmental fellowship for preparation in the U.S., and **Richard Stern**, economics, received a language training grant.

JCSS fellowships:

The Joint Committee on Eastern Europe (JCSS) of the American Council of Learned Societies and Social Science Research Council announces the results of their 1990-91 competitions. The following UC Berkeley graduate students have received fellowships. *Dissertation research:* **Joann Goven**, political science; *advanced graduate training:* **Barbara Connolly**, political science; **Richard Stern**, economics; *language training:* **Larry McLellan**, Slavic.

FLAS/MELLON awards:

Federally funded Foreign Language Area Scholarship (FLAS) competitions are announced by the Graduate Division each spring. Contact the Division or the Center late in Fall semester for information and guidelines on Soviet and East European programs. These students received FLAS awards for 1990-91. *Academic year awards:* **Page Brennan**, history (Russian); **Marc Garcelon**, sociology (Russian); **Philip Goldman**, political science (Russian); **Lynne Haney**, sociology (Hungarian); **Eric Hirsch**, geography (Hungarian); **Robert Rendall**, Slavic (Serbo-Croatian); **David Schneider**, music (Hungarian); **Ruth Shields**, linguistics (Hungarian); **Matthew Siena**, political science (Russian); **Carrie Timko**, political science (Russian/Polish); **Molly Wesling**, Slavic (Polish); **Richard Wood**, Slavic. *Summer language fellowship awards:* **Howard Allen**, sociology; **Page Brennan**, history; **Jacqueline Friedlander**, history; **Christopher Larkosh**, comparative literature; **Anita Liang**, linguistics; **Larry McLellan**, Slavic; **Jeffrey Rossman**, history; **Sylvia Swift**, comparative literature; **Molly Wesling**, Slavic; **Robert Wessling**, Slavic.

Recipients of the Center's Mellon Grants for 1990-91 are as follows. *Mellon dissertation grants:* **William Comer**, Slavic; **Conor Daly**, Slavic; **Catherine Evtuhov**, history; **Julie Mueller**, history. *Language training awards:* **Margherita DiCeglie-Allen**, Slavic (Russian); **Jacqueline Friedlander**, history (Russian); **Ted Gerber**, sociology (Russian); **Janeen Jones**, Slavic (Ukrainian).

A further group of graduate students have received fellowships or awards other than those listed above. **Catherine Evtuhov** (history), Charlotte Newcombe fellowship; **Emily Fowler** (Slavic), UC/Leningrad exchange (EAP); **Brian Horowitz** (Slavic), Lady Davis fellowship; **Margaret Kabalin** (Slavic), Fulbright fellowship; **Celia Leckey** (Slavic), SSRC fellowship, Phi Beta Kappa fellowship, UC/Leningrad exchange (EAP); **Susan McCroskey** (Slavic), Regents Intern fellowship; **Bonnie North** (dramatic art), Regents fellowship; **Kirsten Painter** (comparative literature), entering with University fellowship and Charles Atwood Kofoed Eugenics fellowship; **Nerissa Russell** (anthropology), Chancellor's dissertation year fellowship; **Mirjana Stevanovic** (anthropology), Regents fellowship; **Sylvia Tomaskova** (anthropology), University fellowship. **Theodore Weeks**, Fulbright fellowship (Poland).

Graduate student teaching awards: The Academic Senate's Committee on Teaching honored 207 graduates for outstanding classroom instruction at a May 3, 1990, reception at Alumni House. Among the awardees were several with Center affiliations. **Celia Leckey**, Slavic; **Mitchell Morris**, music; **Slawomira Salameh**, sociology; **Sylvia Tomaskova**, Anthropology; and **Fred Van Doren**, Slavic. In addition, **Joe Brandt** was awarded the outstanding teaching assistant award by the Department of Political Science.

New Graduate Students

The Center is happy to welcome to Berkeley 21 new graduate students in the field. The influx of students from a variety of disciplines declaring interest in the Slavic and East European area is striking in both quantity and quality. The departments listed below are their present ones.

Peter Blitstein, BA Johns Hopkins University, 1990 (political science)

Shawn Elliot, BA Cornell University, 1990 (comparative literature)

Serge Glushkoff, BA UC Santa Cruz, 1987 (geography)

Joseph Grady, BA University of Virginia (linguistics)

Lynne Haney, BA UC San Diego, 1990 (sociology)

James Holmes, BA UC San Diego, 1990 (political science)

Oleg Kharkhordin, BA Leningrad State University, 1985 (political science)

Nancy Latham, BA Stanford University, 1986 (political science)

Heiki Lindpere, JD (law)

Jennifer Margulis, BA Cornell University, 1990 (comparative literature)

David Matthews, BA Carleton University, 1978; BA University of Alberta, 1988; MA University of Alberta, 1990 (Slavic)

Arthur (William) McKee, AB Princeton University, 1990 (history)

Bonnie North, BA SUNY Purchase, 1990 (dramatic art)

Susan Overdorf, BA University of Michigan, 1990 (political science)

Kirsten Painter, BA Oberlin College, 1987 (comparative literature)

John Randolph, BA Carleton College, 1989 (history)

Kazakh-American Research Project Explores Iron-Age Nomadic Culture

Dr. Jeannine Davis-Kimball received her Ph.D. in art history and archaeology from UC Berkeley's Department of Near Eastern Studies. As assistant curator of the Los Angeles Museum of Art, she curated an exhibit: "Ancient Art of the Asian Steppes and Highlands," which further increased her interest in the art and archaeology of the steppes. In summer 1990 Dr. Davis-Kimball began the excavation of an early Iron-Age Kurgan, the burial site of a Saka chieftain. It was the first stage of a five-year archaeological project in Kazakhstan, whose overall purpose is to exchange information and to increase English-language data on the region. Dr. Davis-Kimball returns to the USSR in May 1991 for further work on the project.

The area around Alma Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, was once the homeland of early Iron-Age nomads called the Saka. In recent years Kazakh archaeologists have uncovered thousands of artifacts, many in the Scytho-Siberian style, in gold, silver and bronze, from massive burial mounds known as Kurgans.

While in the Soviet Union in 1989, Dr. Davis-Kimball was approached by the director of the Institute of History, Ethnography and Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences, KSSR, about the possibility of a joint US/USSR project, the first of its kind in Soviet Central Asia. "The Soviets have a policy of sending out a team of salvage archaeologists to any site slated for development, where landscape features point to the likelihood of archaeological finds," said Dr. Davis-Kimball. "This is the situation at Issyk, near Alma Ata, where housing will eventually cover our excavation site. They asked us to join them."

The US team, members of the Kazakh-American Research Project with Dr. Davis-Kimball as principal investigator, arrived at Issyk in April 1990, where they were met by a Soviet team from the Kazakh Academy of Sciences headed by Alma Ata's chief salvage archaeologist. At Issyk the team made camp, putting up yurts "of contemporary design, but probably similar in type to those used by the Saka," and got to work. "We were excavating in an area of extensive Saka burial activity," said Dr. Davis-Kimball. In Kurgan burials, the body was buried along with artifacts and then covered to ground level. A mound of stone and packed earth was then constructed above the grave. Some of these mounds are huge, the Kurgan we worked on—one in a group of thirteen—was 50 feet across and 7 feet deep."

The large stones were taken from rivers descending from the nearby Tien Shan mountains. At some sites one finds concentric circles of stones reminiscent of British barrow culture burials. "Most of the Kurgans have been



Dr. Jeannine Davis-Kimball on the steppes near Dzhambul

looted by grave robbers, largely in ancient times. We did make some finds, however: the entire skeleton of a young chieftain, bearing no signs of a violent death; iron and bone arrowheads; an iron knife; shards of two pots, one with an unusual (for the Saka) incised triangular decoration. We also saw wonderful petroglyphs at two sites, which could have been made at any time from the neolithic through the medieval period."

During her time in Kazakhstan Dr. Davis-Kimball also participated in an excavation at a medieval citadel site near Dzhambul. "These were a people active from the 6th through the 13th centuries A.D., an admixture of Uzbek and Indo-European, with some Mongol input. Evidence suggests that theirs was a cultural melting pot, with Zoroastrian, Christian and Buddhist influences."

While preparing for next season's excavation, Dr. Davis-Kimball is in daily contact with her Kazakh colleagues, an impossibility until very recently. "When I was in Moscow, I noticed an ad in the paper for the S.F./Moscow Teleport. I realized it was just what I needed for communication purposes and immediately made the necessary arrangements. Getting the modem to Alma Ata was the most difficult part; I had someone who was going anyway make the delivery and the hookup and show the Soviets how to use it." The connection has simplified life for her in many ways. "The paperwork is awful—visas to be gotten and so forth. The hookup makes it all so much easier." In addition to planning the 1990 project, she has been at work on a photo exhibit, which was shown as part of the 4th annual International Conference on Central Asia at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in September 1990. □

Library Report

CD-Rom Databases and "Current Contents" on the Melvyl On-Line Catalog

The Library has acquired several CD-ROM indexes which should facilitate research in the area of Slavic Studies. CD-ROM indexes are machine-readable databases which employ powerful boolean searching capabilities to locate information. An additional advantage of such an index is that it is run on a PC work station. This allows for the downloading of bibliography to a formatted floppy disk for transfer to a home computer. A full listing including a detailed description of these products can be obtained by typing "news cd-rom" on any GLADIS catalog terminal. Some of the indexes which are most useful to Slavic topics: the *MLA Bibliography* and *Sociofile* (Reference Collection, Main Library), the *Congressional Information Service* (Government Documents Department), and the *Social Sciences Index* (Environmental Design Library).

Current Contents, a database accessible on the Melvyl on-line catalog, contains over 900,000 citations from scholarly journals issued between July 1, 1989, and September 5, 1990. The database can be searched by author or by key words in the title. One also can browse the contents of a given issue from any of the indexed journals, a tool which makes keeping abreast of the most recent literature quite convenient. Slavic language titles are not well represented; however, most English and European scholarly journals are included. A password, obtainable at the Reference Desk, is needed for remote dial-up access through home personal computers with modems. Group or individual instruction can be arranged for any of the above mentioned products.

Rare Samizdat Manuscript Donated to the Bancroft Library

Anatoly Vershik, a professor at Leningrad State University and vice-president of the Leningrad Mathematical Society, has donated the manuscript of a samizdat journal entitled *Summa* to the Bancroft Library, Manuscripts Division. The journal, a forum for a wide variety of political, social, and literary discussions, was published and circulated clandestinely eight times during 1979 and 1980.

Professor Vershik's gift is the first carbon from the original publication and the only copy known to be in the West. As one of the editors of the publication, he insisted as a stipulation of his gift that no photocopying restrictions be placed on the manuscript other than those deemed necessary to preserve the fragile typescript pages. According to the donor, *Summa* was published "in a time when such activities were very dangerous" and typifies the samizdat method of publication.

—Allan Urbanic, Slavic Librarian

A Remembrance of James D. Hart, 1911 - 1990

Last July death took Jim Hart, one of Berkeley's very finest, and an admirable person by any criterion. Since first joining the Department of English in 1936, he served the University and this campus with ability and devotion, for the last 21 years as the highly successful director of the Bancroft Library. To the broad public he is best known as the author of *The Oxford Companion to American Literature*, and *An Oxford Companion to California*.

The obituaries have rendered due homage to the deceased (e.g., *N.Y. Times*, 7-24; *Berkeleyan*, 7-25; and especially Kevin Starr's eloquent and personal tribute in the September issue of the *California Monthly*). Quite understandably none of them mentions what, although perhaps a small component of Jim's concerns, is the reason for these lines—his role in promoting Slavic studies at Berkeley at several crucial points.

Before there was a Center for Slavic and East European Studies there was an Institute, the Institute of Slavic Studies, established in 1948 by, of, and for history Professor Robert J. Kerner, then of advanced years and strong opinions. After he passed away in 1957, the Institute, a degree-granting as well as a research entity, was abolished as not fitting well into the campus structure and was replaced by the Center for Slavic Studies, an organized research unit subsisting within the newly-created Institute of International Studies. The Center's first Chair was Professor Charles Jelavich of the Department of History. Jim Hart was vice chancellor for academic affairs at the time. In a recent conversation, Charles recalled fondly the valuable help and encouragement which Jim gave him in putting the Center on the map and on its feet (though Charles justly gives primary credit to Chancellor Glenn Seaborg).

Educational exchanges with the Soviet Union began in 1958. Soon thereafter, Berkeley launched an attempt to enter into exchange relations with Soviet universities. To this end a delegation was put together, consisting of the late Robert Brode, then a senior and distinguished physicist with some prior contacts with Soviet counterparts, and Charles Jelavich, the Center's chair, with vice chancellor James Hart as head. Charles Jelavich could not go for personal reasons and kindly proposed as his substitute the author of these lines. I went. It was my first trip to the USSR, and, as such, of enormous interest, but that's another matter.

We traveled to the USSR in April 1960 (i.e., before the U-2 incident) and negotiated with the rectors of the Universities of Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad. Draft agreements

were hammered out and initialed but in all three cases were vetoed by more powerful authorities. So we returned to Berkeley empty-handed. However, our getting as far as we did was the result in no small measure of Jim's negotiating skills and keen diplomatic sense.

In 1964 Jim, no longer vice chancellor, was once again thrust into Berkeley's Slavic affairs as head of a Slavic studies committee asked to "advise on the general field...[and] evaluate and make recommendations on operating policies and program..." I was a member of the committee, along with Andrew Janos (political science), the late Frederic Lilge (education with a Soviet specialty), Martin Malia (history), H. Franz Schurmann (history, sociology and the Chinese Center), and the late Gleb Struve (Slavic). Jim went to work with his usual dedication and skill and by the end of March 1965 had produced a strong and constructive report, which, one presumes, had an influence on the steady growth of the Slavic faculty at Berkeley over the next 10 years or so.

When the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) was established in the late 1960s, Jim Hart joined the first Board as Berkeley's representative, serving for several years. As I mentioned, Jim's involvement in the Slavic field played, perhaps, a small role in his academic life. Yet, seen from our perspective, his contributions were invariably important, in part on their own merits, but in part because of the character and stature of the man whom we were fortunate to know.

—Gregory Grossman
Department of Economics

New Students/From page 8

Robert Rendall, BA University of Toronto, 1990 (Slavic)
David Rogers, BA Columbia University, 1988 (history)
Naomi Rood, BA Yale University, 1988 (comparative literature)
Ruth Shields, AB Stanford University, MA UC Davis, 1990 (linguistics)
David Woodruff, BA Harvard University, 1989 (political science) □

Associates of the Slavic Center

Send your check, made payable to the Regents of the University of California, to the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, 361 Stephens Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, Attn: ASC.

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Calendar of Events

Now through November

FILMS: Pacific Film Archive continues its series: **Czech Modernism/1900-1940.** Of particular interest is **THE MOVIE PALACE EXPERIENCE AT PFA** on November 30: *Aelita*, the famed Soviet science fiction film, will be shown with a new musical score utilizing the Theremin, a musical instrument invented during the 1920s Constructivist period. The composer, Dennis James, will perform on piano and Theremin, with accompaniment. *Aelita* is based on a story by Leo Tolstoy. See the Calendar listing for showtime. PFA is located at 2625 Durant Avenue, Berkeley. Call 415/642-1412 for information, or 415/642-5249 to charge by phone.

Now through February 24

EXHIBIT: Installation and sculpture. Noted Hungarian sculptor Levente Thury has created an environment incorporating the figure of the *Golem* in a piece which moves from the inchoate void to the theme of creation from the clay of the earth. Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2911 Russell street, Berkeley. Gallery hours, Sundays through Thursdays, 10:00-4:00. Phone 415/849-2710.

Tuesday and Thursday

SOVIET TV: An hour of selected programs from Soviet television, including *Vremia*. B-4 Dwinelle Language Lab, 12:30-1:30 p.m. *Vremia* is also shown Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. at Slavic House, 2347 Prospect, Berkeley.

Wednesdays

FILM: Russian/Soviet films at Slavic House, 2347 Prospect, Berkeley. Call 643-3506 for information. 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 1

LECTURE: Richard Erb, deputy managing director, International Money Fund, will speak on the topic, "Global Economy in Transition: Opportunities and Risks." Sponsored by the World Affairs Council of Northern California. No admission charge; call 415/982-2541 for more information. Le Meridien Hotel, 50 Third Street (at Market), 5:30 p.m. reception, 6:15 p.m. program.

Friday, November 2

LECTURE: Eniko Bollobas, deputy chief of mission, Hungarian Embassy, Washington, D.C., will speak on

feminist movements in Central Europe. Sather Room, Dwinelle Hall, noon.

Saturday, November 3

FILMS: Czech Modernism/PFA: *Greasepaint and Gasoline* (*Pudr a benzin*; a.k.a. *Powder and Gas*, Czechoslovakia/France, 1931, 92 mins., in Czech with English titles). Directed by Jindrich Honzl. 7:30 p.m. *Your Money or Your Life* (*Pênize nebo zivot*, Czechoslovakia, 1932, 96 mins., in Czech with English titles). Directed by Jinrich Honzl. 9:20 p.m.

BALL: The Polish Arts and Culture Foundation presents its annual gala Polonaise Ball. This year's event also celebrates the 130th anniversary of Ignacy Jan Paderewski's birth (November 6). Tickets for the dinner and Ball are \$125, \$90 for those under 30 years old. Call 474-7070 for invitations and information. Gold Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco. 7:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 4

FILM: Czech Modernism/PFA: *Heave Ho!* (*Hej rup!*, Czechoslovakia, 1934, in Czech with English titles). Directed by Martin Fric. 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 7

BROWN BAG LUNCH: Natal'la Ivanova, writer and member of the editorial board of "Druzhba narodov," will discuss "The Problem of Nationalism in Literature and Politics in the USSR." 442 Stephens, noon.

Thursday, November 8

LECTURE: Stefan Stoyanov, member of Parliament, Opposition Party, Bulgaria, will speak on "The Current Situation in Bulgaria." 442 Stephens, noon.

Thursday, November 8, and dates through Sunday, November 18

THEATER: *Camillo's Kabbalistic Theatre* (1531), reconstructed by drama professors Mel Gordon and Henry May. Directed by Mel Gordon; world premiere. Based on the text of Renaissance scholar Guilo Camillo's description of the Ideal Theater, this production is the first theatrical reconstruction of his dream. It is a multi-media installation, with 300 Zoharistic and Homeric images. A University Theater production. Zellerbach Playhouse, Campus. For ticket information and showtimes call 415/642-9988; you may also call the Department of Dramatic Art for

information.

Saturday, November 10

CONCERT: Kitka, singing traditional and contemporary vocals from Eastern Europe, performs three concerts at the second annual FESTIVAL OF VOICES. Tickets are \$14-\$18 at the door, \$12-\$16 in advance, children under 12 and seniors \$14 door and \$12 in advance, at major outlets. Call 415/549-3313 for more information. First Congregational Church, Post and Mason Streets, San Francisco. 8:00 p.m.

Monday, November 12

LECTURE: Alexander D. Knysh, secretary of the Group of Islamic Studies, Institute of Oriental Studies, Leningrad, will speak on the topic, "The Study of Islam and Islamic Mysticism in the Soviet Union." Location TBA, noon. TO BE CONFIRMED

Tuesday, November 13

LECTURE: Gregory Grossman, professor in the Department of Economics, will speak on "The Soviet Economy: Any Hope Through Ordeal?" Co-sponsored by the World Affairs Council of Northern California and Armstrong College. Members \$6, non-members \$9, students with I.D. \$3-4. Call 982-2541 for more information. Armstrong College, 2222 Harold Way, Berkeley. 7:30 p.m. reception, 8:00 p.m. program.

Wednesday, November 14

BROWN BAG LUNCH: Ladislav Venys, director, Department of International Relations, Czech Ministry of Environment, will provide "A Comparison of Recent Political and Economic Developments: Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe." 442 Stephens, noon.

LECTURE: Alexander Tsypko, Soviet philosopher and deputy director of Bogomolov's Institute, will speak on a topic TBA. Co-sponsored by the Berkeley-Stanford Program in Soviet Studies. TO BE CONFIRMED

LECTURE: Sergei Plekhanov, deputy director, Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada, Soviet Academy of Sciences, will discuss "The Lessons of the Cold War." Sponsored by the World Affairs Council. Members \$21, non-members \$25, program only, \$5-\$8. Call 982-2541 for more information. Holiday Inn,

625 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. 11:30 a.m. reception, 12:00 noon lunch.

Friday and Saturday, November 16, 17

CONCERT: Kitka performs at the FESTIVAL OF VOICES (see November 10 listing). Calvin Simmons Theater, Kaiser Convention Center, Oakland. 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 17

FILMS: Czech Modernism/PFA: *Distant Journey* (*Daleka cestal* a.k.a. *Terzin Ghetto*, Czechoslovakia, 1949, 103 mins., in Czech with English titles). Directed by Alfred Radok. 7:30 p.m. *Crisis* (*Krise*, Czechoslovakia, 1938, 71 mins., English narration). Directed by Herbert Kline. 9:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 18

FILM: Czech Modernism/PFA: *The World Belongs To Us* (*Svet patri nam*, Czechoslovakia, 1937, 95 mins., in Czech with English titles). Directed by Martin Fric. With a slide lecture by Mel Gordon, Professor of Dramatic Art, on "V & W Liberated Theater: Slapstick on the Edge of Abyss." V & W refers to the famous team of comic actors, Voskovec and Werich. 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 20, and dates through Sunday, December 2

OPERA: *Khovanshchina*, by Modest Mussorgsky. The San Francisco Opera presents Mussorgsky's sweeping portrait of the struggle between old-world Russia and the radical influence of Peter the Great. In Russian with English supertitles. For dates, tickets and showtimes, call 415/864-3330. The Opera also has a new toll-free number, 1-800-660-SING. Box office hours are 10:00 - 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. War Memorial Opera House, Van Ness and Grove.

Wednesday, November 21

BROWN BAG LUNCH/SLIDE PRESENTATION: Sergei Romaniuk, art historian and associate of the Museum of the City of Moscow, will speak on "The Preservation of Historical Monuments in Moscow." 442 Stephens, noon.

22-24 November

DANCE FESTIVAL: The 39th annual California Kolo Festival. Ethnic dance classes and demonstrations, food and dance parties with live bands. Call 415/

Calendar/from page 13

481-8481 for reservation information. Reservations must be received by November 15. Spartan Complex, San Jose State University.

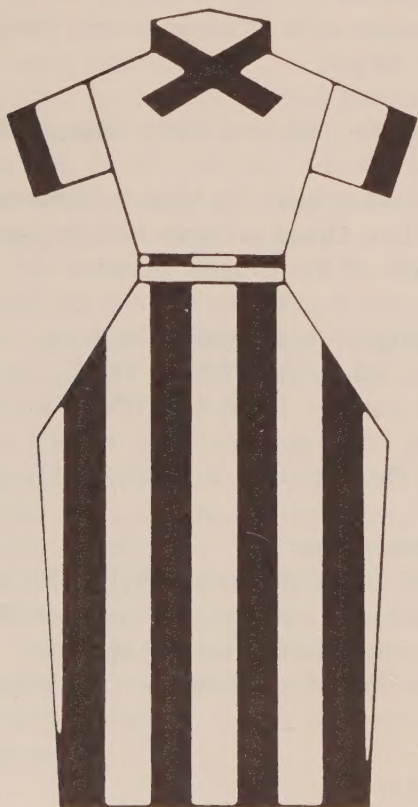
Wednesday, November 28

BROWN BAG LUNCH: Nicolae Gheorghe, researcher, Center for Sociological Studies, Bucharest, will discuss "Gypsy Identity and the Contemporary Political Sociology of Romania." 442 Stephens, noon.

Friday, November 30

FILM: Czech Modernism/PFA: THE MOVIE PALACE EXPERIENCE AT PFA. *Aelita* (USSR, 1924, 90 mins., silent with Russian intertitles, live English translation and musical accompaniment). See above listing (top of Calendar) for details. Directed by Yakov A. Protazanov. 7:30 p.m.

For up-to-date information on calendar items, please check the posted notices at the Center, 361 Stephens Hall.



БРАНДАХЛЫСТОВА

Gordon/from page 7

MG: Part of the reason has to do with the Moscow Art Theater's pivotal role in the continuance of Russian/Soviet culture—what I was talking about before. But he had friends in high places. Lenin liked him; he was even allowed to tour. Stanislavsky's children eventually left the Soviet Union, but I doubt that the thought of emigration ever crossed his mind.

AH: *He was getting older, and after 1928, was in bad health. Could this also have been a reason?*

MG: Certainly. He did spend long periods in Paris and in other parts of Europe under a doctor's care. But he remained in favor with Stalin, who had an obsession with pinning down who was the best at everything. "Who's the leader of the Soviet Union? Stalin. Who's the greatest poet? Mayakovsky. Who's the best trainer of actors? Stanislavsky." It had to do with Stalin's belief that there could be only one best in each category. Stanislavsky, by the way, has something of a black name among Soviet artists today because of his association with Stalinism. However, theater people in general were an elite during the 1930s.

AH: *Stanislavsky died in 1938, but the Moscow Art Theater still exists, doesn't it?*

MG: Oh yes. It's both an institution and still a venue for interesting theater sometimes.

AH: *What happened to Meyerhold in his last years? He didn't fare as well, did he?*

MG: No. First of all, he lost his audience. The same plays that drew laughs from soldiers and working people in 1923, were seen as dated, as passé, in 1928. Also, he was under governmental pressure to create realistic propaganda, something he could do only intermittently. At some point he made a decision, conscious or not, to do only a certain kind of play. Whether a classic revival or a propaganda piece, all the plays he chose from this time out had the same theme: someone tries to buck the system, fails, and dies, usually by committing suicide.

AH: *Again the same question: Why didn't he leave?*

MG: He was planning to. He went on tour to Central Europe in 1930 and announced there that he was going to New York, but he didn't go. My guess is the government let it be known it was holding his children.

AH: *And then he was arrested in 1939.*

MG: We discuss in the book the circumstances surrounding his arrest and subsequent trial and execution. His wife

One of the first things I tell my class of directors is, "There are two secrets in the theater: Stanislavsky and Meyerhold."

was found murdered days after his arrest in June 1939, but for years no one knew exactly when he had died. It looks as though he was shot in February 1940.

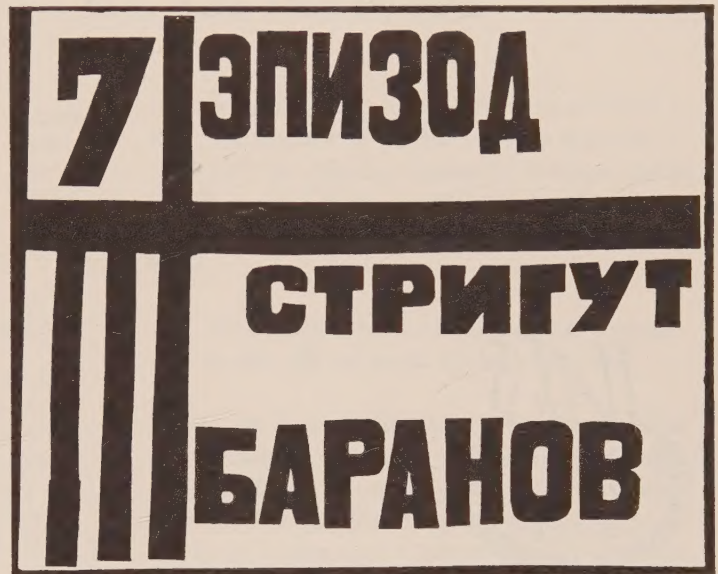
AH: *How would you compare and contrast Stanislavsky and Meyerhold as artists?*

MG: One of the first things I tell my class of directors is, "There are two secrets in the theater: Stanislavsky and Meyerhold." Stanislavsky changed acting forever. One of my favorite quotes helps to explain Stanislavsky's approach. His system was hard to learn, hard to do. Someone came up to Stanislavsky one day and said, "You know, over at the Maly Theater, where they don't use your system, they have better actors. They sound better, they move better, and they don't do any of your exercises." Stanislavsky said, "Look. The difference is that my actors are using real material, real behavior, and are trying to pour it into their characters. The reality they bring to the role imposes itself on the audience's mind, so that they never forget it. Even if the acting doesn't look as good, it provides a lasting impression of reality. Have you ever seen a violent incident?" Stanislavsky went on. "It's nothing like pretend violence. You'll never forget it. Or, if you've ever seen two people in love in some tavern, you'll never forget the look on their faces. But you immediately forget what actors pretending to be in love look like."

Stanislavsky found a way to create the impression of reality in the mind of the actor and then leak it into the mind of the character. That's how the actor communicates to the audience on some deep level.

Meyerhold's contributions are different. He was such an inventive director and a force in 20th century theater, but because theater has soaked up so much of what he did, his contributions are not immediately visible. They include innovations in how to create stage composition, how to create kinesthetic pleasure in the audience, how to work in time, to break down a text, to super-theatricalize anything. Stanislavsky's achievement is about this other secret, how to make a deep connection between the actor and audience.

Set and costume designs for Meyerhold productions appear on pages 7, 11, and 14. On page 5 is a cut of the Moscow Art Theater sea gull logo. Below is a slogan for a projection in the Meyerhold production, Earth Rampant.





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